Example

The passage:

Military awards have long been considered symbolic of royalty, and thus when the United States was a young nation just finished with revolution and eager to distance itself from anything tasting of monarchy, there was strong sentiment against military decoration. For a century, from the end of the Revolutionary War until the Civil War, the United States awarded no military honors. The institution of the Medal of Honor in 1861 was a source of great discussion and concern. From the Civil War until World War I, the Medal of Honor was the only military award given by the United States government, and today it is awarded only in the most extreme cases of heroism. Although the United States is still somewhat wary of granting military awards, several awards have been instituted since World War I.

Line (5) *(10)*

The questions:

1. The *tone* of the passage is
   (A) angered
   (B) humorous
   (C) outraged
   (D) informational
2. The author's *purpose* in this passage is to
   (A) describe the history of military awards from the Revolutionary War to the Civil War
   (B) demonstrate an effect of America's attitude toward royalty
   (C) give an opinion of military awards
   (D) outline various historical symbols of royalty
3. The passage would probably be assigned reading in a *course* on
   (A) general science
   (B) psychology
   (C) American history
   (D) interior decoration

The first question asks about the *tone* of the passage. To determine the tone of a passage, you should look for any indications of emotion on the part of the author. In this passage, the author uses historical facts to make a point about America's sentiment against military awards; the author does not make any kind of emotional plea. Therefore, the best answer to this question is answer (D). There is nothing in the passage to indicate any anger (A), or humor (B), or outrage (C) on the part of the author.

The second question asks about the author's *purpose* in writing the passage. To answer this question correctly, you should refer to the main idea of this passage as outlined in the first sentence. The main idea is that there has been strong sentiment against military awards in the United States because military awards are symbols of royalty. The author gives historical facts about military awards as details to support the main idea. Since the purpose is determined from the main idea and the overall organization of details, the author's purpose is to outline various historical symbols of royalty. The author's sentiment against military awards is because of its negative sentiment against royalty. The best answer to this

Phillips, D. (2003). Longman Preparation Course for the TOEFL Test: The Paper Test. New York: Longman